

Assessing Roadside Vegetation Management Alternatives
Project Management Meeting
September 13,2004

September Action Items

Item #	Action	Due Date
1.	Continue sending Ray names of people who you feel should be on the Technical Committee.	October 5
2.	Ray – send out Technical Committee list to everyone	ASAP
3.	Get informational contact sources to Kristina	September 27
4.	Continue sending comments or additions regarding the final list of decision factors. The list will be presented at the next meeting.	September 27
5.	Send Kristina additional ideas on alternative practices.	September 27
6.	Send names of people who you think should be included in the interview process to Kristina	September 27
7.	Dustin Terpening will break out the Project Schedule from the Scope and put it out on the website.	September 20
8.	Ray will send out the next meeting agenda one week in advance	September 22
9.	Post interview group on the website	ASAP
10.	Kristina & Rich write a Data Collection Requirements paper	October 5
11.	Next Meeting: in Boardroom **New Time: 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.**	October 5, 2004

Press Release – Copies of a press release for Whidbey Island and a graph of herbicide use trends including 2004 data on the island were handed out. Dave talked briefly about what the herbicide numbers meant. He said we need to be looking at the results in terms of cost and effectiveness. There was a dramatic drop in herbicide use this year. He also discussed the volunteer planting project as announced in the press release and encouraged the Whidbey Island group members to start spreading the word and recruiting volunteers for the October 23rd event.

Value Engineering – Dave talked about the upcoming Value Engineering meeting. A group of experts will evaluate our roadside construction & design practices for all the projects that will take place on Whidbey Island over the next several years. This is a way to expedite change at WSDOT; the results will be documented and presented to decision makers. The meeting will be on Sept. 22, 23, 24. Marianne asked how they can connect with members of the VE. She was wondering if there was any opportunity for exchange of information. Dave said that report will show the results and

recommendations. They're anticipating participation from the Washington Toxics and WINS groups.

Agenda – Dave said today's meeting will probably be a shorter than normal meeting and that it would be more of a status report than an exchange of new information. He had Stan go over the ground rules for the group. Stan talked about how this is a group that has both voting and non-voting members and before we get into the big decisions, we need to find a way of distinguishing between the two groups. One suggestion is to have the name placards be of two colors. Heather voiced her concern regarding staying on the agenda and protracted comments by participants. Stan said we need to decide as a group how we will handle the voting and discussions now because we have a large group and the number of people may fluctuate from meeting to meeting. He will try to keep the group to the agenda.

Old Business - We went over last meeting's minutes and Ray asked if there were any comments or corrections. In the future, if you see something in the minutes that is inaccurate or that you remembered differently, send Ray an e-mail and he will contact everyone with the change. Dave reminded everyone about the website and what is available to view online. Ray said feel free to send him any comments. Someone had asked about the rewritten statement and Ray said that is also out on the website and then he went over some of the changes that were made.

Action Items – Ray went down the list of the action items from the last meeting:

- Ray has only received one name so far to be added to the Technical Committee list. He said this would be kept open, so get any suggestions you may have to him.
- The list of e-mail addresses has been received by Ray and Cathy.
- The draft agenda was sent out last Thursday. For the next meeting, Ray will try and get it out at least a week before the meeting.
- Kristina said she still needs informational contact sources. Please try and get any you may know of to her by Sept. 27.
- The final scope of work was sent out via e-mail. The task and schedule are included.
- Revised purpose statement was also sent out and is available on the website.

Schedule – Kristina said that she's running into a timing problem regarding the interviews. Because of the safeguards that the University has in place, she needs to obtain permission from the interviewees' employers before talking to anyone. This is to avoid lawsuits that may crop up. Because of this, the process is going slower than expected. Objective #1 from the Scope needs to have a new date of completion. It may be two months instead of one. She doesn't think this will affect the other task timelines. It was suggested that the Project Schedule be put on the website as a separate item. Dustin Terpening from WSDOT has been assigned this task.

New Business – Kristina introduced their graduate research assistant, Jacob Millard and gave a brief summary of his background. Welcome Jacob! She then handed out a

list of decision factors categorized by Operational, Environmental, and Physical Design by her and Ray. She asked the group for input and to get it to her within two weeks and at the latest, by the next meeting. However, even if it's past the cut off date, don't hesitate to still contribute. The final list will be presented at the next meeting.

She then handed out a draft of the Literature Review. This was sorted by topical categories: 1) general topics, 2) storm water practices, 3) articles of maintenance practices in general, 4) operational safety, 5) wildlife use of roadsides and wildlife safety issues, and 6) ecological effects of herbicides (both active and inactive ingredients). The groupings are subjective and open for comment. Jay Davis asked how they researched or found their articles. Kristina said they used the standard databases at the University and put in keywords. This brought up articles and many of these had links to other documents and sites. It's like a snowball effect. She again said that all they're doing is creating the decision framework. Heather asked how or why she decided to consider sources of information in relation to profit & non-profit categories. Kristina said she's not ranking them, just trying to be inclusive of all types of literature. Send suggestions on any literature you feel would be helpful to her.

Angela asked if there is a list of who is going to be interviewed? Kristina said yes and will forward it to be placed on the website. She said she will take suggestions from the group if anyone feels others should be interviewed. Please get this to her as soon as possible. Mark Wahl said he's wondering how WSDOT will handle decision making in regards to the information gathered. Kristina said they're just looking at how other states handle similar situations and then compare it to our state. They're not making any measurements, only comparisons.

Alternative Practices – Kristina said they're still gathering info and if you have any ideas please get them to her within the next two weeks. Heather asked if they will let the group know when they're having difficulty finding info on some of the practices? Kristina said that by the next meeting, she will have a preliminary list and will ask people then for their assistance if they're having problems. She then asked how they (the group) wants it written? Should it be in the format of an executive summary? It was agreed that a short executive summary in the beginning with a list would work.

Interviewing – Angela asked who are the types of people being interviewed? Kristina said they are people who have experience in relation to the decision factors and/or in using alternative techniques. Angela then asked about people who are a little more removed, such as those with an interest or knowledge, but not directly involved with doing the work. Kristina said they had not yet, but that would be a reasonable next step. These would be people who are affected, but don't do the hands on aspect of it. Mark W. asked if they will be interviewing people in the counties. Rich said yes, the regional counties. Heather asked if they will also be putting people into categories by their educational backgrounds and such. Kristina said it would be more by institutions they work in or for. Angela commented that one group that doesn't seem to be represented is the community groups. Kristina said it depends on how you define "community". It's a big group. Dave asked if she meant the public reaction to WSDOT's projects. Angela said yes and also how it has influenced the community. She also suggested talking to people who are in the field who have dealt with the communities. And to get the other

states' feedback on how they have worked with the community groups. Kristina said they could put that under Alternative Practices. Marianne suggested that the National Park Service should be included in the interviews. The U.S. Forest Service was also suggested. Kristina said she will add those two groups to her list.

Other Topics - Mark W. asked if there was a timeline of when and how the new protocols will be implemented and if they're doing additional monitoring of the pilot projects. Ray said we have several sites already set aside for evaluation. Marianne asked what was the basic hypothesis and what are the practices for these projects? Ray said the basic hypothesis is, "What would happen if we stopped maintaining Zone 1" in terms of required changes in maintenance practice and costs in relation to that. Mark said he's concerned because these projects are already underway and then we'll be throwing new protocols in along the way. Dave said the timing does seem somewhat confusing, but we did commit to the public that we would do this right away in these segments and we've stuck to our commitment. Ray said we're not limited to those sites. There are so many different situations and a number of alternatives are already being tested throughout western Washington. Rich asked if there are records being kept on these trials? Is the information being written down somewhere? And are there records of these trial segments beforehand? Initial conditions need to be recorded and sent to the scientists. Ray said right now much of the info is with the people in the field. Dave suggested Kristina and Rich write up a quick assessment of the data that is needed to be used for this project. He said we're going to use the data as best as we can to design a framework. Kristina added that if we find along the way that this practice doesn't work, we'll stop. Mark said that both sides need to agree on what is being done at these sites.

Marianne brought a sample of the material being used on the Greenbank stretch. She showed the plastic material that was found within the compost. She received a call from someone at Island Co. because of the plastic strewn on the roadside. She said grass has been sprouting through this material also. Rich said these early efforts may not be used in the future, but that doesn't mean they have no value to the research.

Next meeting will be on October 5, 2004 in the Northwest Region boardroom. Please note the time change: 1:30-3:30.